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# Communication in today's network

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# **COMMUNICATION IN TODAY'S NETWORK**

## **A THESIS**

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
In partial fulfillment of the  
Requirement for the degree of  
Master of Fine Arts

In

The School of Art

by  
Carter Jahncke Perrilliat  
B.F.A., Louisiana State University, 2002  
May 2011

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to thank my husband Claiborne. Without his constant encouragement, support and reassurance I could not have made it to where I am today.

To the graphic design faculty and my graduate school peers: thank you for your inspiration, motivation and guidance. You helped push me to my potential and reach my goals!

Thank you to my committee members, Lynne Baggett, Courtney Barr, Gerald Bower, Ed Smith and John Malveto.

I am grateful to my family and friends for their advice, understanding and patience through my most stressful moments these past 3 years.

Lastly, I would also like to thank my pug, Herman, who was by my side every step of the way (literally).

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## **ABSTRACT**

Technology has given us many ways of communicating. The most emerging and evolving network of exchanging information today is social media. *Communicating in Today's Network* is a thesis that examines and explores different trends in social media. This body of this work is a result of data collected by surveying active users of social media in society. The results are visually communicated through information graphics. It is intended to inform designers of the importance in learning and identifying ways to communicate with our new developing medium, social media.

## INTRODUCTION

Our world consists of a means of communication that was not present prior to 1994, social media. Methods of communicating have been present in society as early as 3100 B.C. with hieroglyphics.<sup>1</sup> Society has evolved from the public telegraph to the telephone, and now to social media, and will continue to evolve with time. Social media provides the way people share ideas, content, thoughts, and relationships online. Social media differs from so-called “mainstream media”, in that anyone can create, comment on, and add to social media content. It can take the form of text, audio, video, images, and communities.<sup>2</sup>

Social Media is one of the most popular online activities online today offering opportunities for both businesses and individuals to connect with a new audience.<sup>3</sup>

With so many people engaging and using social media it is important to be educated on it, because it becomes interwoven in our lives.

Graphic designers specialize in advertising, packaging, direct mail, marketing material, and many other forms of communicating messages. It is, therefore, important that they are aware of all forms of communication and how they are constantly evolving with other popular trends. Part of a designer’s job is to establish a unique way in which a client can identify it’s self, or a brand identity. This includes logos, colors, design, names, and symbols. Social Media is a tool that designer’s can use to reach millions of people from a variety of demographics and reinforce a client’s brand identity and visual

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1. Phillip B. Meggs, *A History of Graphic Design* (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 1998), 4.

2. David Meerman Scott, *The New Rules of Marketing & PR* (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2010), 38.

3. Brian Solis, *Engage!* (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2010), 19.

elements. Traditional media such as newspapers, magazines, television, and radio have been used for years to deliver a message. The main difference between these customary methods and social media is cost to the client. Not only is social media equally as widespread, it is the most economical way to advertise today. This is very appealing to a small business owner whose budget doesn't allow a full spread in the newspaper. From my own experience I have noticed several small businesses taking advantage of this tool to create a company "fan page" on Facebook, or share an interesting link on Twitter.

Facebook has soared to become the ninth most popular brand online and now boasts the highest average time per person (3 hours 10 minute) among the 75 most popular brands online worldwide.<sup>4</sup>

With the recent popularity and continued growth of social media, designers need to understand, study and know how the public is using these applications. How can designers utilize social media and deliver a client's message in the most effective way?

Our graphic design medium is moving from the pages of big glossy magazines, to tiny squares to the right of Facebook pages. Our audience is less demanding in the quality of photography and they now listen more when they don't feel they are being advertised to. Trends and changes aren't something new. We learn from the history of graphic design and the changes it has gone through over decades. When letterpress, and then computers were first introduced, those who chose to ignore were left behind. Yet, if you learned that tool and used it you were put on the forefront of the design community. This is not to say abandon old trends. Social media to graphic designers is just another tool that we should learn and understand in order to communicate better to our new audience.

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4. Solis, *Engage!*, 19.

The research in this thesis gives a brief insight into how the general public is using social media and what for. I have discovered a method of collecting information from the public so that graphic designers, educators, and the community can become aware of these habits and trends.

## **PROCESS**

### **Survey**

In conjunction with statistics collected from research, I also wanted to conduct research on my own social media network to understand habits of social media. Surveys are often used to collect information from a group of individuals. It seemed obvious to gather this information by means of an online survey, as social media is a web-based medium. The goal: To collect specific data and understand when people are using social media and what it is being used for. This information is important because it will enable a designer to educate their clients and communicate a message in the most effective ways and times on social media. For example, if the research shows that people use social media on the weekends between 4pm and 6pm, a client's advertising dollars are best spent at that time.

By using a survey one can control what data is being collected, and who, it is being collected from. The first step was to generate a series of questions to ask in the survey. The questions were designed to gather basic information. They included, what are people's favorite social media applications, when do they generally check them, and what they are using it for. This survey was designed to get concise basic answers to general questions. Although this particular survey was broad, because of the way it has been designed and built it can be redeveloped to get even more specific information for future research. For example instead of asking if you use social media in the evening or the morning, it can ask do you use social media between the hours of 8-10am, 10am-Noon, or Noon-2pm. After composing the survey questions, it was distributed for feedback. Figure 1 displays my initial questions with comments supporting the purpose for each

question. Some of the test users commented that there weren't a lot of options in the questions. I designed the survey in that way for a purpose. The questions were intended to focus on only the most popular social media applications and what they are being used for at this time. If the user was given too many options I wouldn't have been able to see a strong favor in any of the categories.

Survey Questions	Comments
<p><b>GOAL:</b> In this survey my goal is to get a better understanding of which age groups use social media and what they are using it for. I would like to group people, based on the results, into different groups so I can better understand what those groups are responding to virally (if any)</p> <p><b>THESIS GOAL:</b> I would ideally like to receive 500 (or more) responses. With the collected data I plan to review it and 1.) create an info graphic communicate the results and 2.) use the information communicate to target markets. Ex.) Women the ages 45-55 use facebook in the morning, so posting an ad on facebook in the morning would be the most effective. I attached comments to help understand the reasons behind the questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What social media applications do you use? (check the ones that apply)               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facebook, Twitter, Foursquare, Linkden, none of the above</li> </ol> </li> <li>I use social media mainly for:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional networking, to keep up with friends and family, time-killer during the day, I don't use social media.</li> </ol> </li> <li>I first created my first social media account because               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>network professionally, everyone had one, I wanted look at my friends pictures, my mobile device made it easy for me to sign up</li> </ol> </li> <li>The time of day I usually use social media is               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>morning, mid-day, afternoon, evening after work, all day everyday</li> </ol> </li> <li>I use social media the most               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During the week, on the weekends, I use it the same amount 7 days a week.</li> </ol> </li> <li>I am usually at one of the following places when I check my account(s)               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At work, at home, in lines at the grocery store, in the car</li> </ol> </li> <li>When deciding on a product to buy, I have reached out to my social network for advice               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Always, a couple of times, never</li> </ol> </li> <li>I notice that I am being advertised to on my social network               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Always, sometimes, never</li> </ol> </li> <li>Of all the social media applications my favorite is               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facebook, Twitter, foursquare, linkden                   <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why? (Typebox)</li> </ol> </li> </ol> </li> <li>In one word, how would you describe social media?               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(Typebox)</li> </ol> </li> <li>How old are you?               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15-25, 25-35, 35-45, 45-55</li> </ol> </li> <li>I am               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Female, Male</li> </ol> </li> <li>My job field is best described as:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>finance, advertising (media), technology, I am currently not working</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<p><b>Carter 10/14/10 12:38 PM</b>  <b>Comment [1]:</b> The user will be able to check as many applications as they use. This will determine what apps are most common among males, females, and the age group, and overall</p> <p><b>Carter 10/14/10 12:57 PM</b>  <b>Comment [2]:</b> The user will only be able to click the answer that applies to them the best. What are different age groups using social media for?</p> <p><b>Carter 10/14/10 12:58 PM</b>  <b>Comment [3]:</b> The user will only be able to click the answer that applies to them the best. What makes people sign up for a social media account? The technology that is available to them? Or because the rest of society is doing it, or because it gives you more of an edge from a professional standpoint?</p> <p><b>Carter 10/14/10 12:58 PM</b>  <b>Comment [4]:</b> The user will only be able to click the answer that applies to them the best. What time of day are people using social media?</p> <p><b>Carter 10/14/10 12:58 PM</b>  <b>Comment [5]:</b> The user will only be able to click the answer that applies to them the best. During the week which days are most effective reach a certain market?</p> <p><b>Carter 10/14/10 12:47 PM</b>  <b>Comment [6]:</b> The user can check all that apply</p> <p><b>Carter 10/14/10 12:58 PM</b>  <b>Comment [7]:</b> The user will only be able to click the answer that applies to them the best. Social media has been referred to as the worlds largest referral program, is it</p> <p><b>Carter 10/14/10 12:58 PM</b>  <b>Comment [8]:</b> The user will only be able to click the answer that applies to them the best. Do people notice the ads? Is it the older generation or younger?</p> <p><b>Carter 10/14/10 12:58 PM</b>  <b>Comment [9]:</b> The user will only be able to click the answer that applies to them the best. Here the user will be able to comm...</p> <p><b>Carter 10/14/10 12:55 PM</b>  <b>Comment [10]:</b> Easy, complicated, fun, futuristic...etc.... This will help me in designing materials for certain groups</p> <p><b>Carter 10/14/10 12:58 PM</b>  <b>Comment [11]:</b> The user will only be able to click the answer that applies to them the best. Who is using social media for professional development?</p>

Fig. 1 - Survey Questions

## **Research**

Social Media is a resource that is being widely used across many fields. Marketers use it as a tool for advertisement, Advocacy groups are using it to make their voices louder, and educators use it to reach their pupils in a different way. It was necessary to investigate another department. I approached the Manship School of Mass Communications, to see if there was pre-existing research before conducting the survey. I emailed 18 faculty members that had done research pertaining to social media. In return I corresponded with Judith Sylvester and Yongick Jeong. Both of them directed me to Pavica Sheldon. Sheldon has her Doctorate in Philosophy and presented her dissertation on face-to-face communication and Facebook. During a meeting with Sheldon, she shared a survey with me that she had conducted along with the questions she had asked in the survey. Sheldon's research was on human interactions on Facebook therefore her questions were far more specific and unrelated to my research topic. She reviewed my proposed questions and we both felt that the simplicity of the questions would help me reach my goals for the survey. It was concluded that the survey was ready to be distributed. The survey's intent was to gather responses from people who use social media. Non-users were still able to respond to the survey yet their answers weren't valuable to the information I was collecting.

## **Technology/Design**

It was important to the integrity of the survey and results that it did not look like a basic survey that a responder might disregard it. The survey's design needed to engage the visitor and keep them interested throughout all nine questions in the survey. I

researched on-line surveying companies like zoomerang.com, freeonlinesurveys.com, and constantcontact.com. These companies all allow you to build surveys online, but the company controls the design by giving the user a predesigned template. To be able to deliver a survey and control the design, I would need to build a website. I decided that the best way to develop it was in Dreamweaver. Adobe Dreamweaver, a web designing software, allows the designer to manage and dictate every aspect of a website's composition. Figure 2 displays the opening page of the survey. When developing the template that would be used for each of the questions, I thought about how to make it more unique than an on-line questionnaire so that it would captivate the user. Blue is commonly used in social media applications and I felt it was appropriate for the background palette. Additionally the blue was a contrast to most surveys, which all had predominantly white backgrounds.

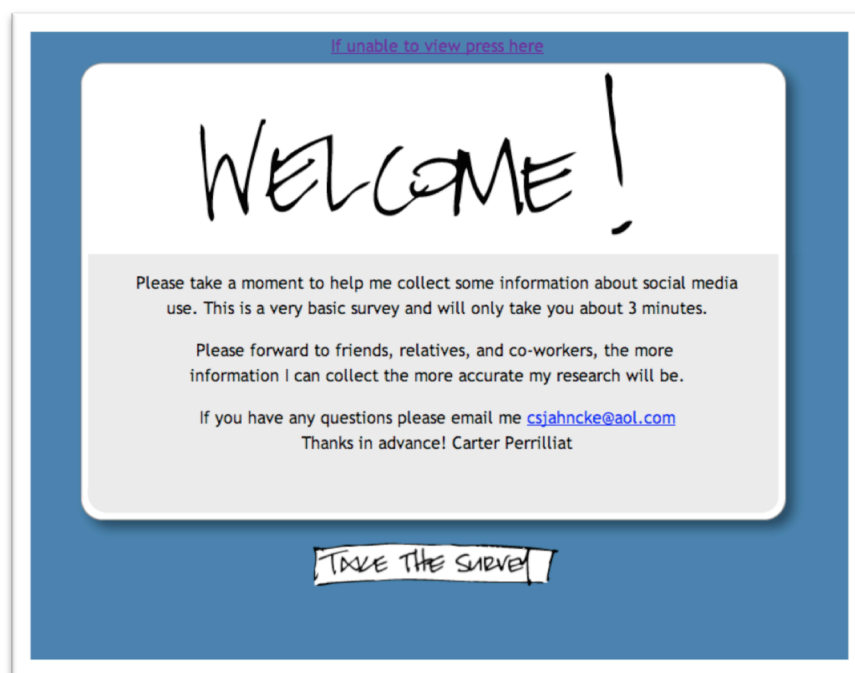


Fig.2 – Home page, survey



The survey was intended to accommodate over 100 responses, so therefore a system needed to be thought out and executed to receive this quantity of results. One option for receiving results was after the user completed the survey an email, with the results, was sent to the administrator, who would record the data. For receiving small amounts of responses, this would have worked, but manually receiving the information and inputting it into a document or database wasn't efficient for a large amount of data. I decided to build a database to store the results and accommodate larger responses.

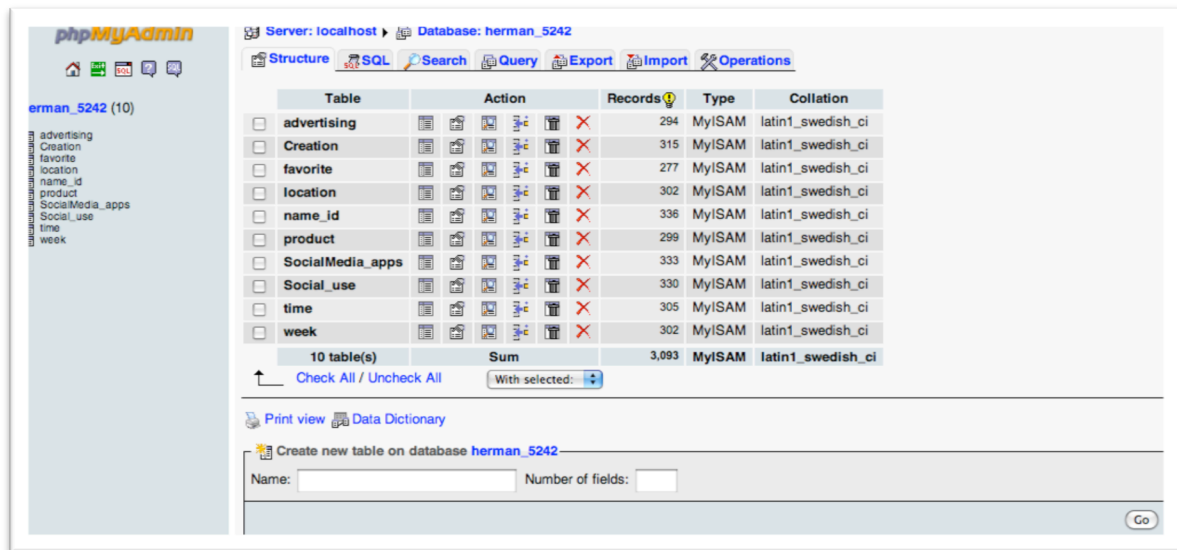
Traditional websites use static code, which is a collection of webpages, cascading style sheet files, and image files that are stored on server and delivered to a web client using HTTP server software.<sup>5</sup> A website user sends out a request using a URL (Uniform Resource Identifier, or the domain name for the website) to retrieve information and the server in return finds the information and sends it back to the client in the form of a webpage. A website consists of either static pages, or dynamic pages. The process for dynamic pages and static pages are almost the same. However, with a dynamic page the information is sent to the server where it triggers an application on the server and works with server side resources such as databases. It knows how to do this by looking at the file extension. In this particular survey I wanted to have the responses stored in a database therefor, the pages needed to be dynamic pages. To build the website, I used PHP coding which is a general-purpose scripting language designed for web development to produce dynamic web pages.<sup>6</sup>

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5. "Understanding Browsers, Servers, and Databases.", Released Sept. 22, 2010, <http://www.lynda.com/Dreamweaver-CS5-tutorials/with-php-and-mysql/68620-2.html>.

6. Wikipedia contributors, "PHP" last modified March 17, 2011, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PHP>.

In order to have a database, it needed to be stored somewhere. I used a program called MAMP (Macintosh, Apache, Mysql and PHP)<sup>7</sup> this program allows you to store the survey results locally on your home computer. The PHP code that was used in the website now becomes important to allow communication with the MAMP program on the local server. Within MAMP, I built a database (herman\_5242) to collect the information from the survey. (figure 3) For each of the survey's question I built a table to accumulate the selection that the user picked. (figure 4) The database then keeps a running record of the responses.

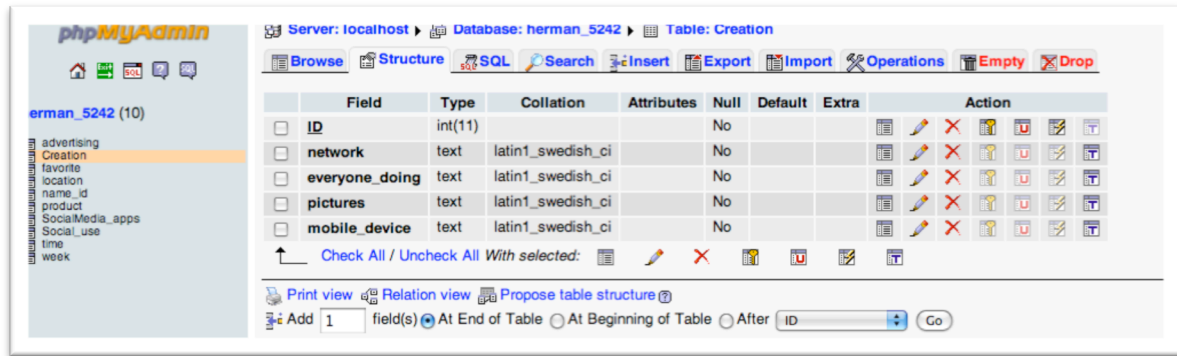


The screenshot shows the phpMyAdmin interface for the database 'herman\_5242'. The left sidebar lists the database and its tables: advertising, Creation, favorite, location, name\_id, product, SocialMedia\_apps, Social\_use, time, and week. The main area displays a table with columns: Table, Action, Records, Type, and Collation. The table lists 10 tables, all using the MyISAM engine and latin1\_swedish\_ci collation. The total number of records across all tables is 3,093.

Table	Action	Records	Type	Collation
<input type="checkbox"/> advertising		294	MyISAM	latin1_swedish_ci
<input type="checkbox"/> Creation		315	MyISAM	latin1_swedish_ci
<input type="checkbox"/> favorite		277	MyISAM	latin1_swedish_ci
<input type="checkbox"/> location		302	MyISAM	latin1_swedish_ci
<input type="checkbox"/> name_id		336	MyISAM	latin1_swedish_ci
<input type="checkbox"/> product		299	MyISAM	latin1_swedish_ci
<input type="checkbox"/> SocialMedia_apps		333	MyISAM	latin1_swedish_ci
<input type="checkbox"/> Social_use		330	MyISAM	latin1_swedish_ci
<input type="checkbox"/> time		305	MyISAM	latin1_swedish_ci
<input type="checkbox"/> week		302	MyISAM	latin1_swedish_ci
10 table(s)	Sum	3,093	MyISAM	latin1_swedish_ci

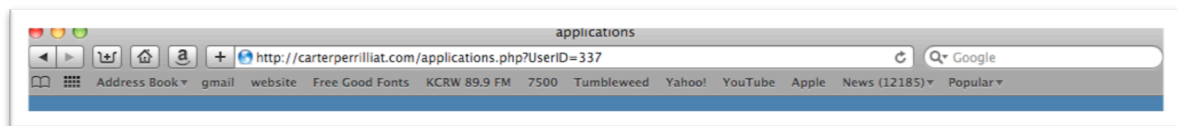
Fig. 3– screen shot from opening page of database herman\_5242

7. “MAMP: Mac – Apache – MySQL – PHP” accessed on March 1, 2011, <http://www.mamp.info/en/mamp/index.html>.



**Fig. 4 – screen shot question what did you create your first social media account for?**

To understand the technicalities of building a database, and the PHP coding I consulted with a web architect, Al Vitter of GCR Consulting, Inc., a software development company. Together we collaborated on the coding side of the website. The design was added at the very end after the website and database were functioning properly. Vitter also helped set a numbering ID system in place so that if a user did not complete the survey it was recognized as incomplete data. In figure 5, you will see the

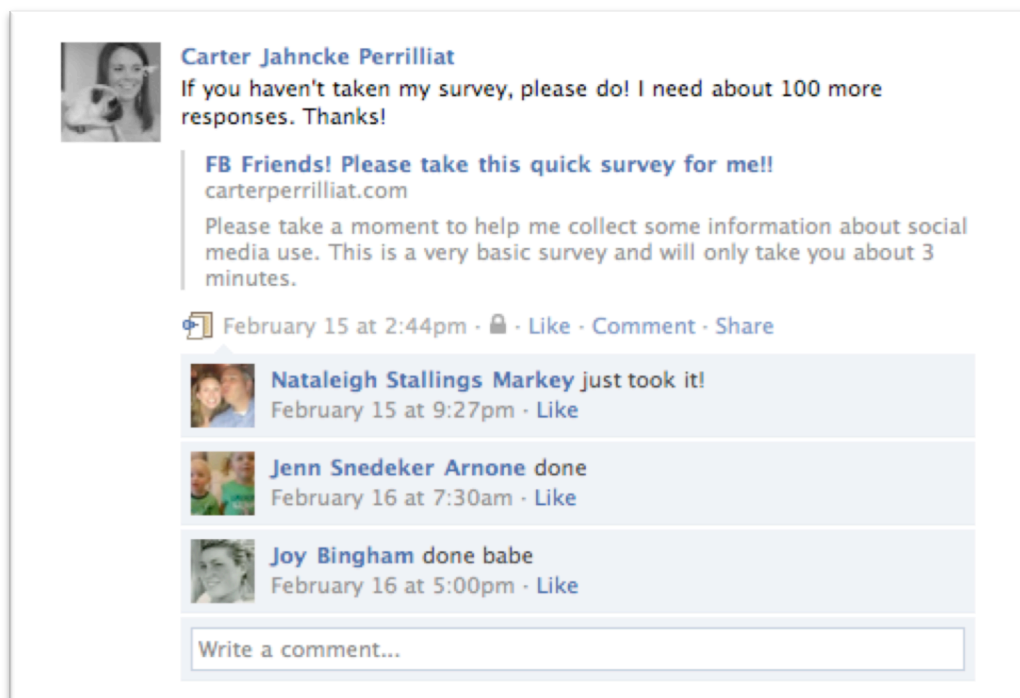


**Fig. 5 - User ID**

URL of the survey, at the very end of the URL is a “user ID” that is a number. The first page of the survey asked a series of questions: Are you male or female, out of 4 age groups which do you fall in and what job industry are you in. Once the user answers these questions, they are given a name ID number. This number is carried from page to page with the user to identify his or her responses. This in return allowed me to identify the data in groups. For example, if I wanted to know how many males between the ages of 15-25 use Facebook in the evening, I would be able to look at the data this way. This is

important to this research because now it can be analyzed in the future in many different ways. Additionally, this name ID system can be applied to any research survey that I am conducting.

Once the design was in place and everything was working and tested, I distributed the survey to the public using a couple of different methods. I started with my own social network (figure 6). I posted the survey to my own wall on Facebook, (the wall is a public writing space so others who view your profile can see what has been written on your wall.)<sup>8</sup> which allowed my friends within Facebook to click on the link, and this directed them to the survey. They could also post to their own pages creating a web of people to complete the survey. I sent out an email to my contacts, and lastly I sent it to the Director



**Fig. 6 – posting to my Facebook wall (screen shot)**

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8. “Facebook wall” accessed on April 11, 2011, [http://www.webopedia.com/TERM/F/Facebook\\_wall.html](http://www.webopedia.com/TERM/F/Facebook_wall.html).

of the Art school, Rod Parker, who was able to send out an email with the survey link to the entire School of Art at Louisiana State University.

For a week I posted the survey to my wall on Facebook every other day, which I found through research to be the most effective way to reach your social network. After exhausting my email contacts, and Facebook friends I started analyzing the data. When the data is input into the database, it shows up as a 1 or 0. (figure 7) In order to examine the data and understand the results it was exported from the database Herman\_5242 into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Excel has a calculation feature that allowed me to add up results and give them percentages for each of the questions. In the end this helped in organizing my data in a manner that would be understandable to people looking at the final results. (figure 8). Figure 9 shows all of the questions and their final results in the Excel document.

← T →			ID	always	sometimes	never
<input type="checkbox"/>			1	0	1	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			2	1	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			3	0	1	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			4	0	1	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			5	0	0	1
<input type="checkbox"/>			8	1	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			7	0	1	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			9	0	1	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			10	1	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			11	0	1	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			12	0	1	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			13	0	0	1
<input type="checkbox"/>			14	0	1	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			15	1	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			16	1	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			17	1	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			18	0	1	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			19	0	1	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			20	0	1	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			21	0	1	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			22	0	0	1
<input type="checkbox"/>			23	0	1	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			25	0	0	1
<input type="checkbox"/>			24	1	0	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			26	0	1	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			27	0	1	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			28	0	1	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			29	0	1	0
<input type="checkbox"/>			30	0	0	1
<input type="checkbox"/>			31	0	1	0

Fig. 7 – data input (Herman\_5242) (screen shot)

icebook	Twitter	Foursquare	LinkedIn	none		networking	friends_family	time_killer	no_use		network	everyone_pictures	mobile_device		morning	mid_day	afternoon	evening	all_day		week	weekends	7days
275	73	30	96	24		16	235	27	30		49	115	123	6	33	23	36	117	76		28	98	156
88.71%	23.55%	9.68%	30.97%	7.74%		5.19%	76.30%	8.77%	9.74%		16.72%	39.25%	41.98%	2.05%	11.58%	8.07%	12.63%	41.05%	26.67%		9.93%	34.75%	55.32%
Total						Total					Total					Total					Total		

Fig. 8 – data in the Excel Spreadsheet (screen shot)

Which social media Applications do you use? (check all that apply)

Facebook	Twitter	Foursquare	Linkden	none
275	73	30	96	24
88.71%	23.55%	9.68%	30.97%	7.74%
Total				310

What do you use social media mainly for?

networking	friends_family	time_killer	no_use
16	235	27	30
5.19%	76.30%	8.77%	9.74%
Total			308

What did you create your first social media account for?

network	everyone_doing	pictures	mobile_dev
49	115	123	6
16.72%	39.25%	41.98%	2.05%
Total			293

What time of day do you use social media the most?

morning	mid_day	afternoon	evening	all_day
33	23	36	117	76
11.58%	8.07%	12.63%	41.05%	26.67%
Total				285

When do you use social media the most during the week?

week	weekends	7days
28	98	156
9.93%	34.75%	55.32%
Total		282

Where do you mostly check your social media accounts?

home	work	grocery	car
195	74	0	13
69.15%	26.24%	0.00%	4.61%
Total			282

When deciding on a product to buy, do you reach out to your social network for advice?

always(P)	(p)sometin	(p)never
2	89	188
0.72%	31.90%	67.38%
Total		279

Do you notice you are being advertised to on your social media application?

(a)always	(A)sometin	(A)never
106	134	35
38.55%	48.73%	12.73%
Total		275

What is your favorite social media application?

facebook	twitter	foursquare	linkden	none
232	16	1	9	0
89.92%	6.20%	0.39%	3.49%	0.00%
Total				258

Fig. 9 – Final Results in Excel Spreadsheet (screen shot)

## THE WORK

Information visualization is an ideal challenge for graphic designers. Trained to communicate precisely through visual language and experienced in creative problem solving, designers can put all their skills to use.<sup>9</sup>

A Graphic designer's job is to create visual solutions to communicating information. Information graphics are a way to present complex information in a clear way. The problem with the data collected in Herman\_5242 was that it was difficult to see and understand in the format that it was collected. The intent of the survey was to collect results from social media users only, so it was appropriate to have a web-based medium for the survey. It was important to share the material with both users and non-users of social media, as the purpose of this research is to provide them with insight on the social media habits in this day and age. Therefore a print-based medium was best for the results. The print-based layouts can also be converted into a pdf (Portable Document Format), which can then be emailed if necessary to share this information in the future. Some of the challenges designing information graphics were communicating a hierarchy of information. I wanted to develop a way to design the results in a layout so that the viewer could primarily see each question/category, secondarily see the result to each question clearly, and tertiary see the remaining results. Another design problem was making sure the results could be understood individually yet all stand as one cohesive body of research. Figures 10 – 13 show the different stages in the design process.

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9. Robert Klanten, Sven Ehmann, Nicolas Bourquin, Thibaud Tissot, Data Flow 2 (Gestalten, Berlin: Eberl Print GmbH, 2010), 6.



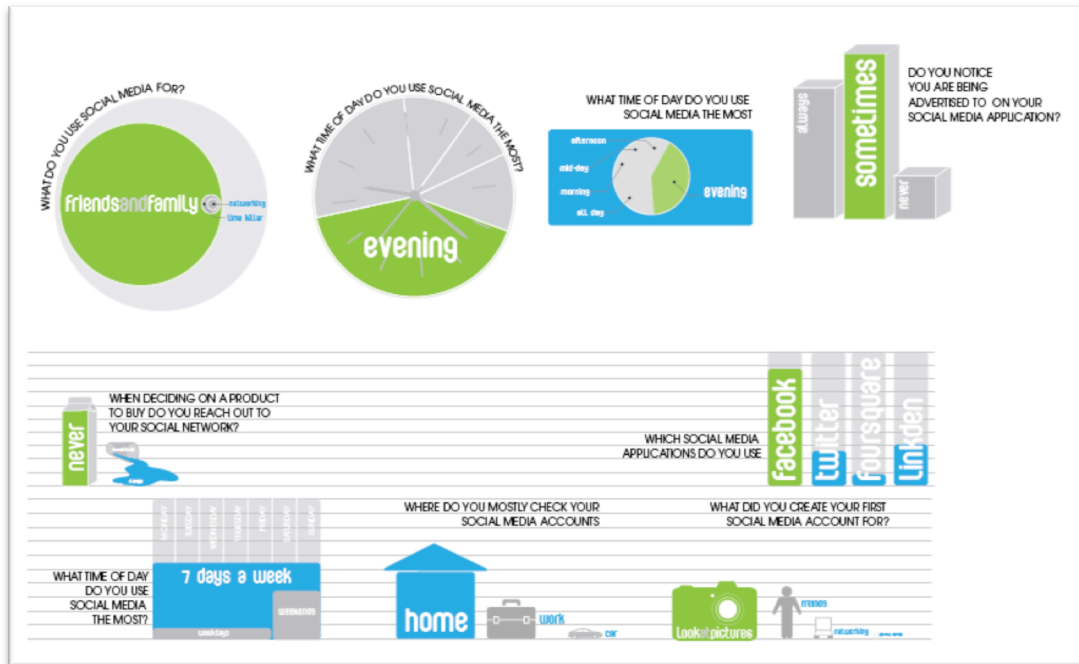


Figure 10 – progression of design process

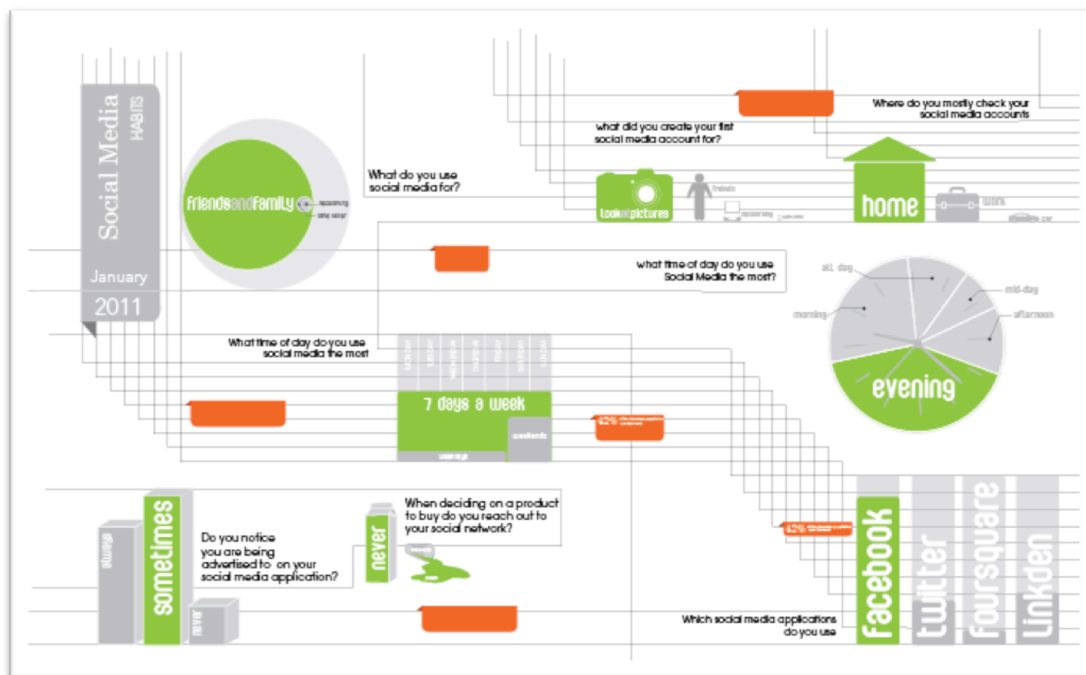
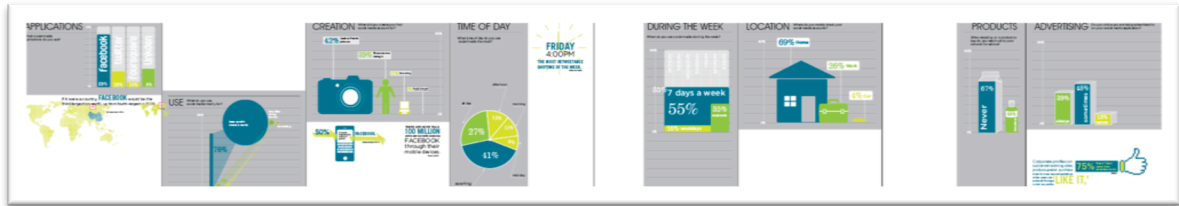
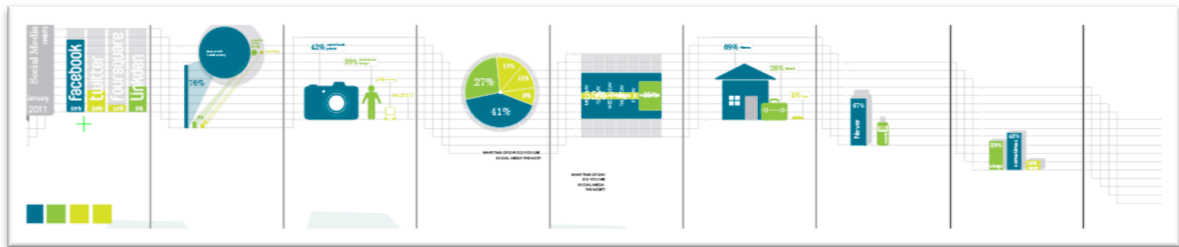


Fig. 11 – progression of design process

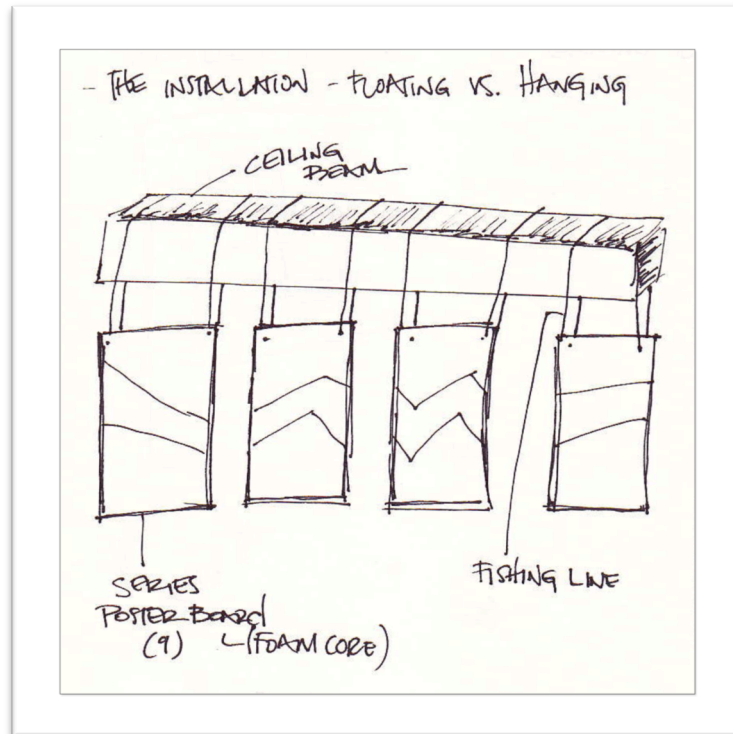


**Fig. 12– progression of design process**



**Fig. 13 – progression of design process**

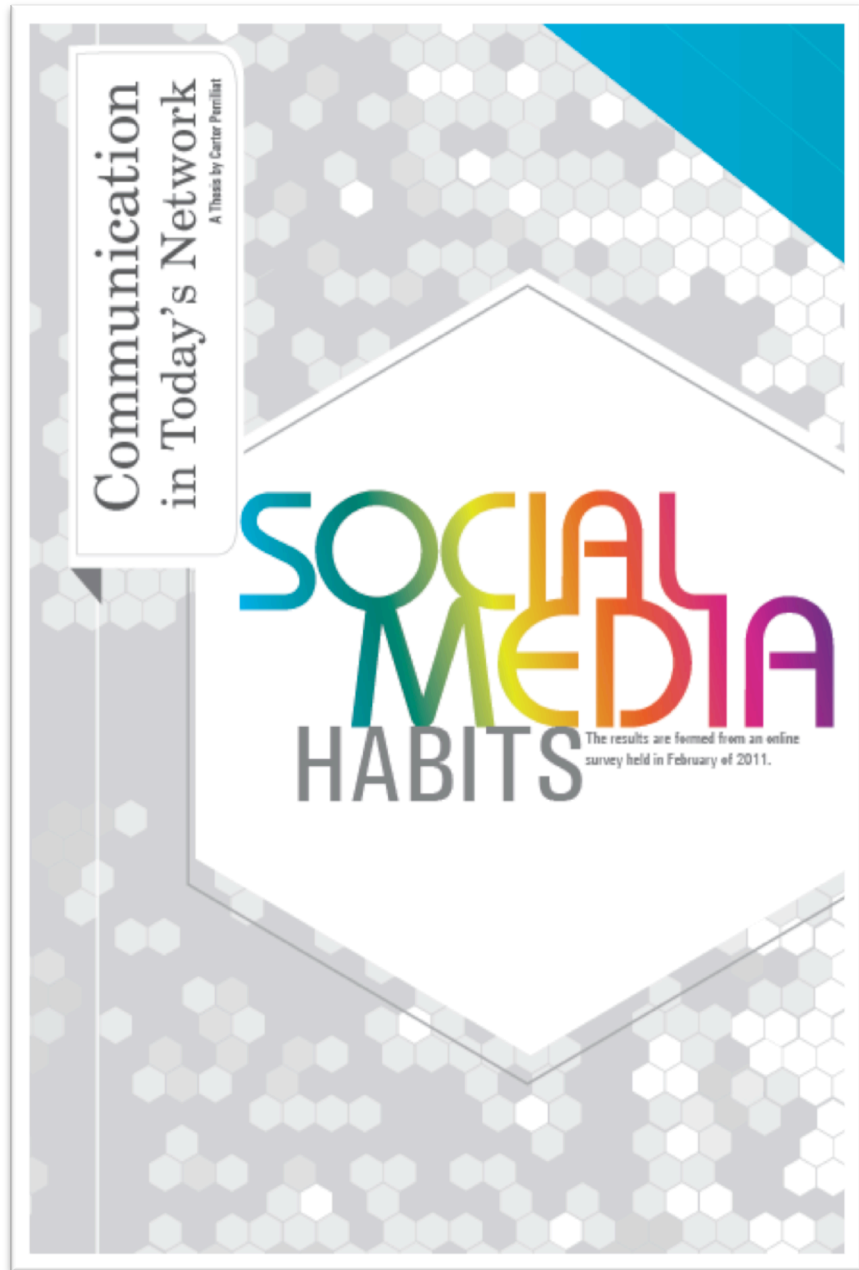
I started to think of the space in which the viewers would be looking at these graphics. The space offered movable walls, which initially my thought was to hang the series of posters from these walls. Social media is content that travels through the Internet. The Internet is a system that connects us globally and in most cases wirelessly. If the viewer could walk through the gallery and see the information weightlessly floating from the ceiling the concept then relates to the subject matter, by wirelessly suspending from the ceiling. Figure 10 shows the sketch for the intended gallery space.



**Fig. 14 – gallery space layout**

The final piece is a series of nine posters displaying the information collected from the survey. They are each tied to the ceiling beam using monofilament string that is almost invisible, giving the illusion that the compositions are floating. The idea is for the wire not to be seen, which reinforces the idea that social networks and people are connecting all around us yet we aren't connecting with people face to face. Each board transitions to the next using a color gradient that embodies the whole series. The headline for each subject uses a color from the gradient. These colors indicate the questions dominant response. Paired with the color gradient is a structured wave, which has a grid system that flows from one board to the next in a random pattern. This is to keep the viewer engaged and move their eye from one subject to the next. Figures 15-24 show the final series of boards individually. It is important to keep the series in sequential order

because the unifying device that keeps the body of work tied together as a whole is the gradient bar. If they aren't in order then they lose that structure. They can be seen separately but the research is more impactful as one whole body of work. Figure 26 shows the final printed product hung in the gallery space.



**Fig. 15 – Final piece “title”**

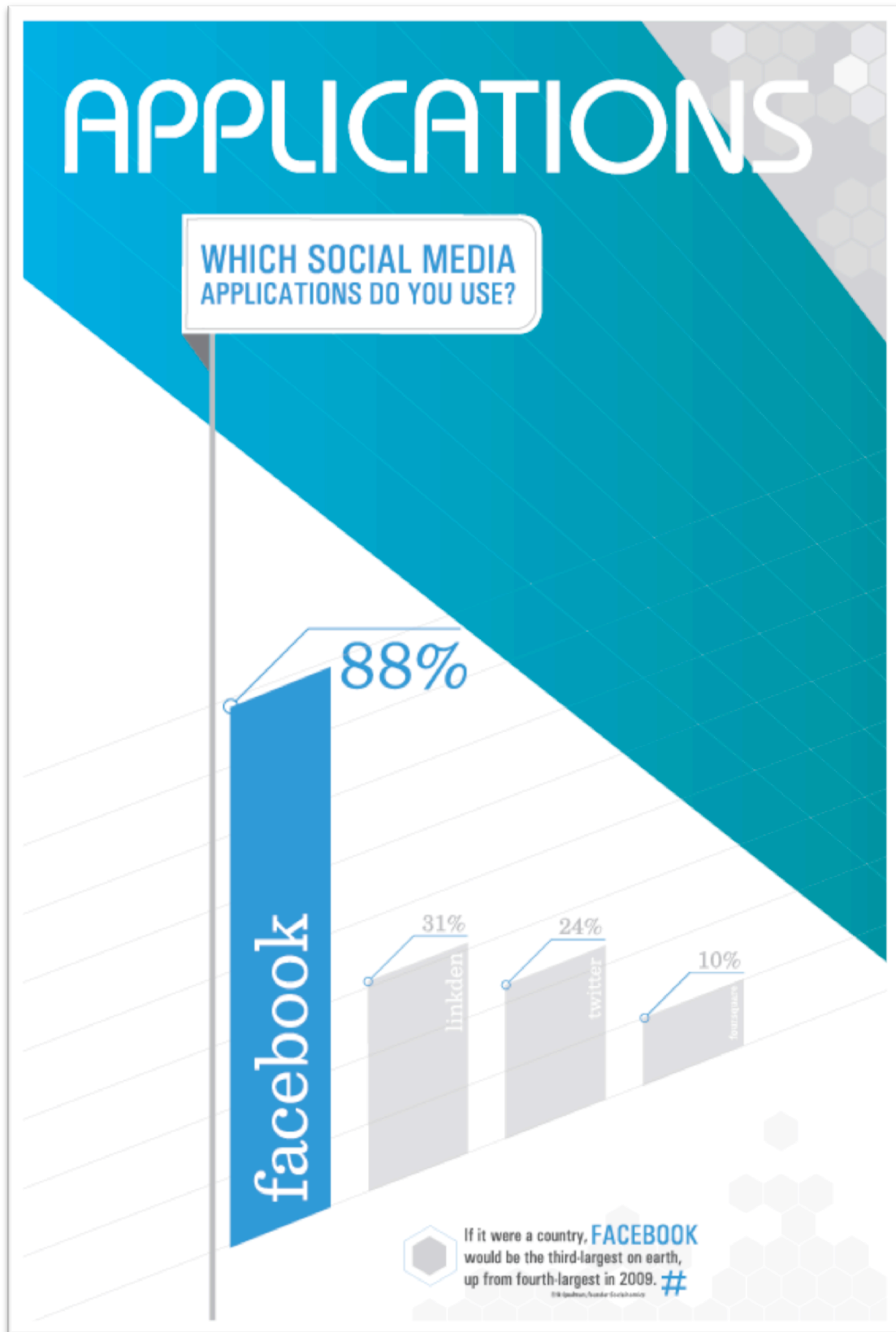


Fig. 16 – Final piece “Applications”

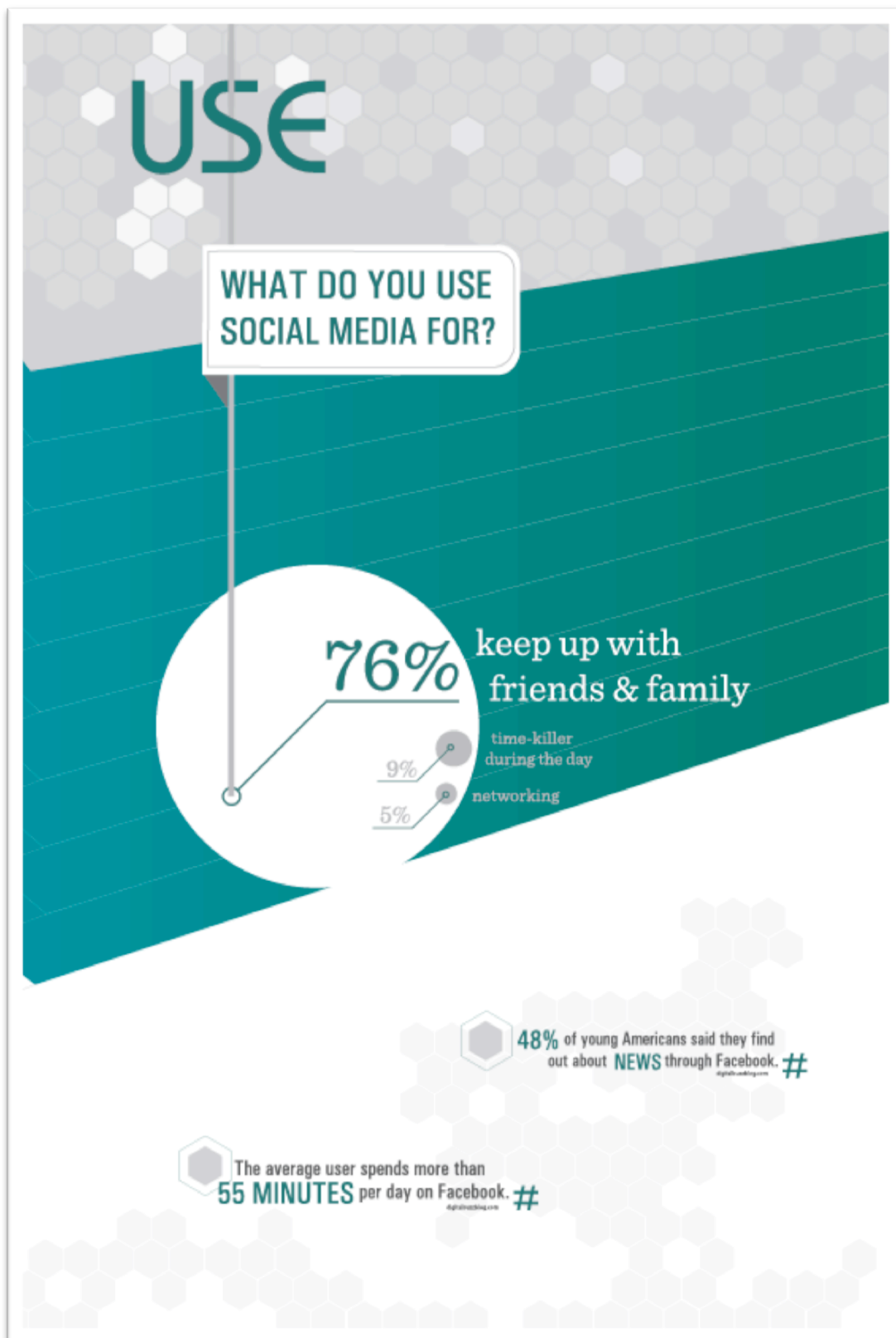


Fig. 17 – Final piece “Use”

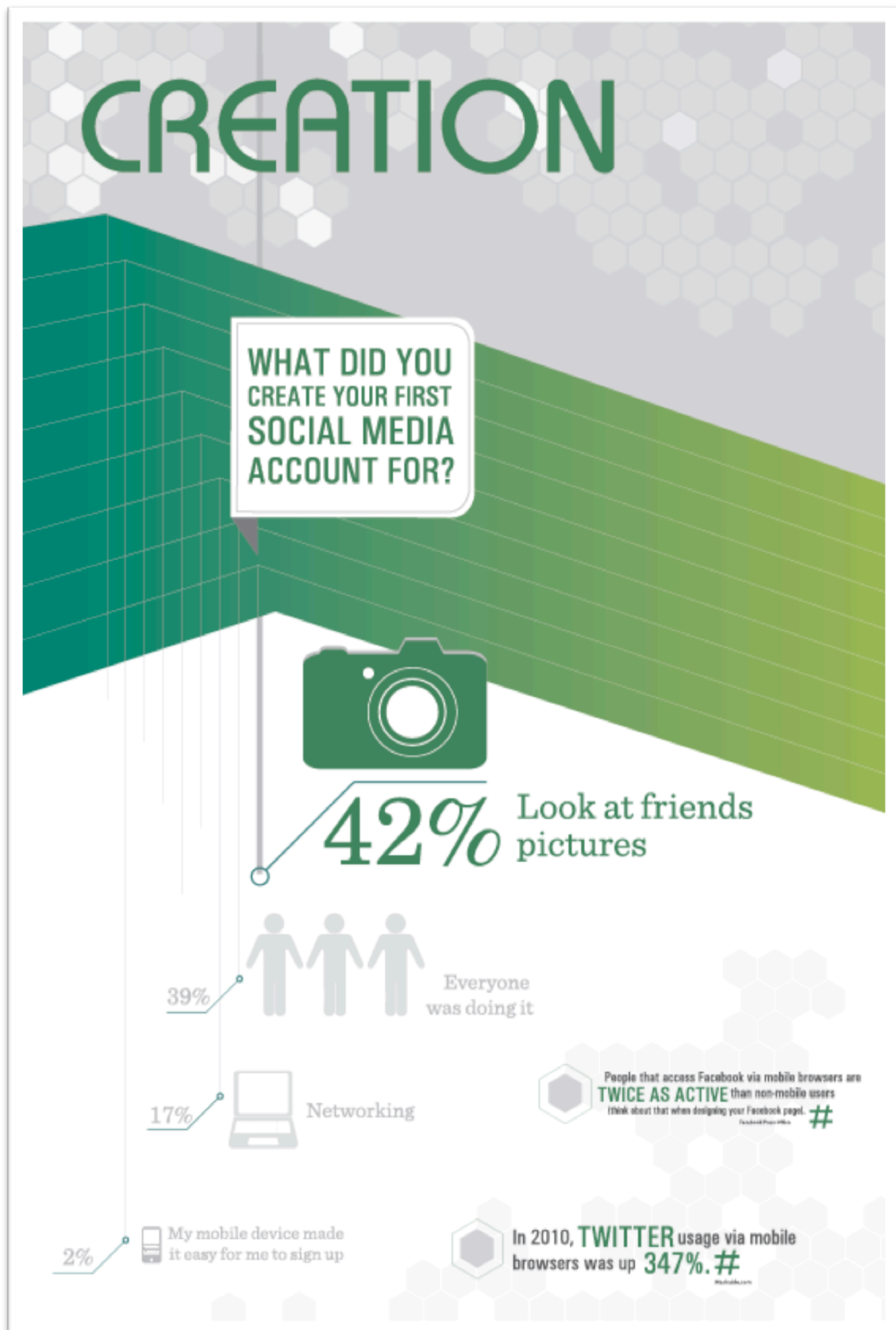


Fig. 18 – Final piece “Creation”

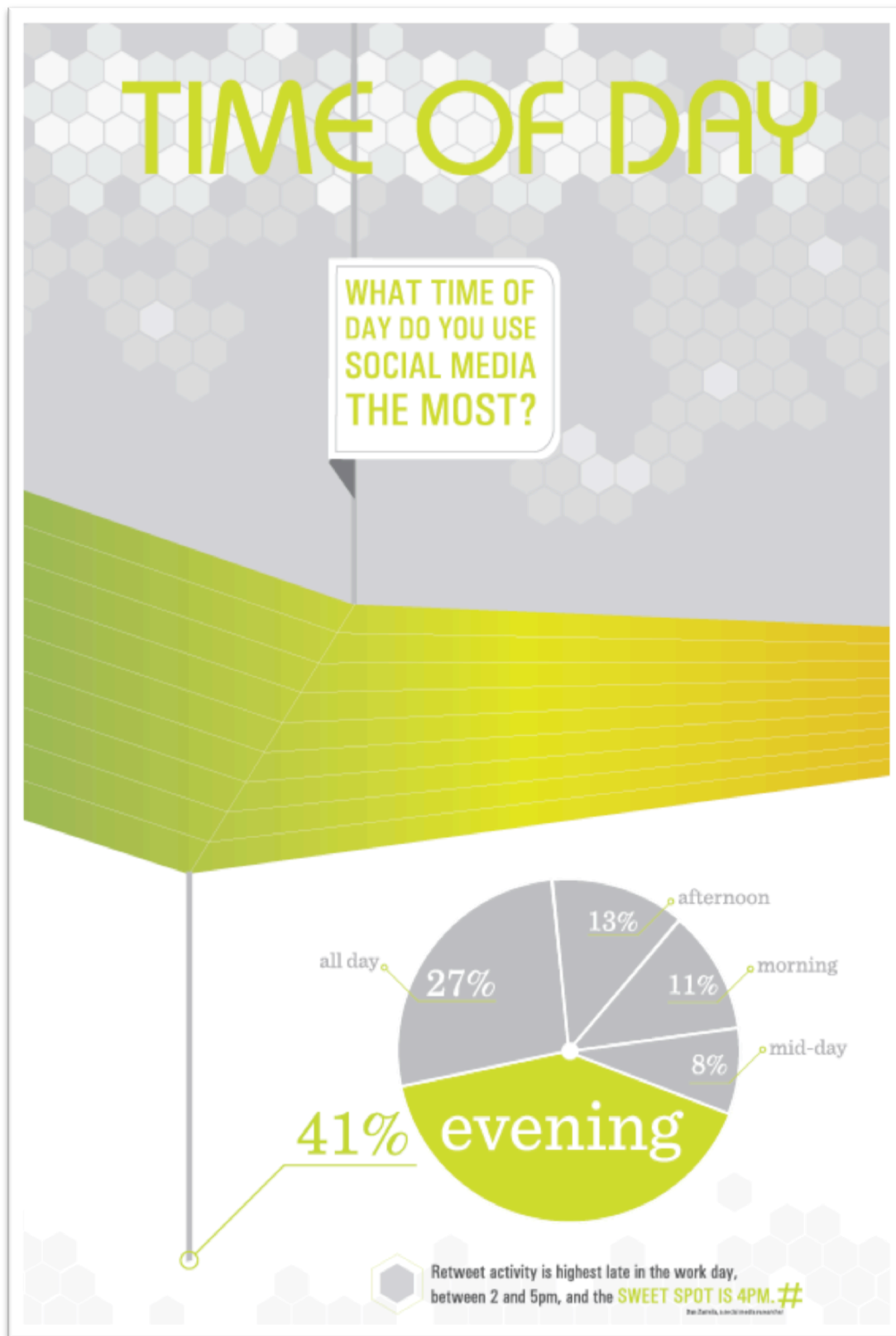


Fig. 19 – Final piece “Time of Day”



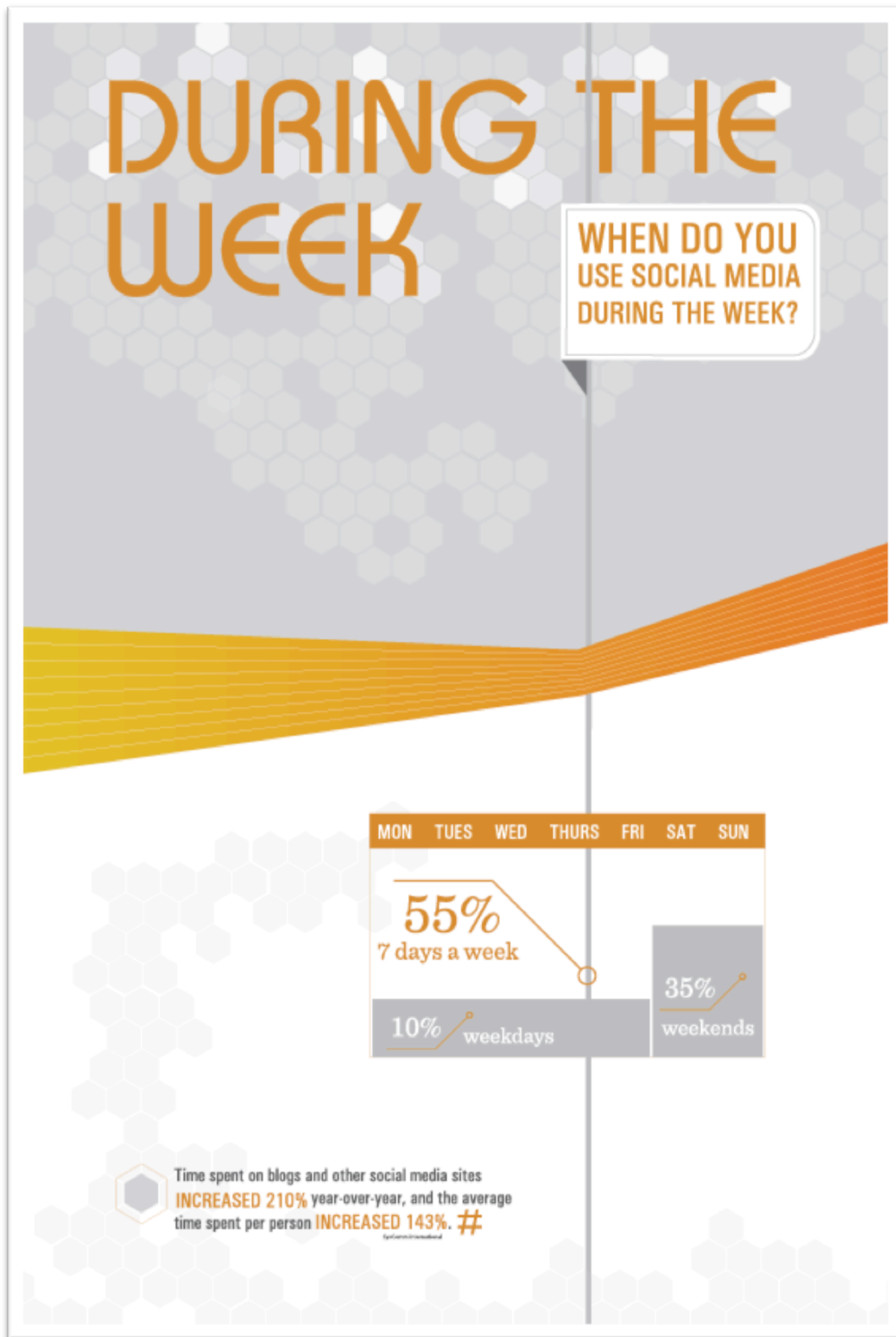


Fig. 20 – Final piece “During the Week”

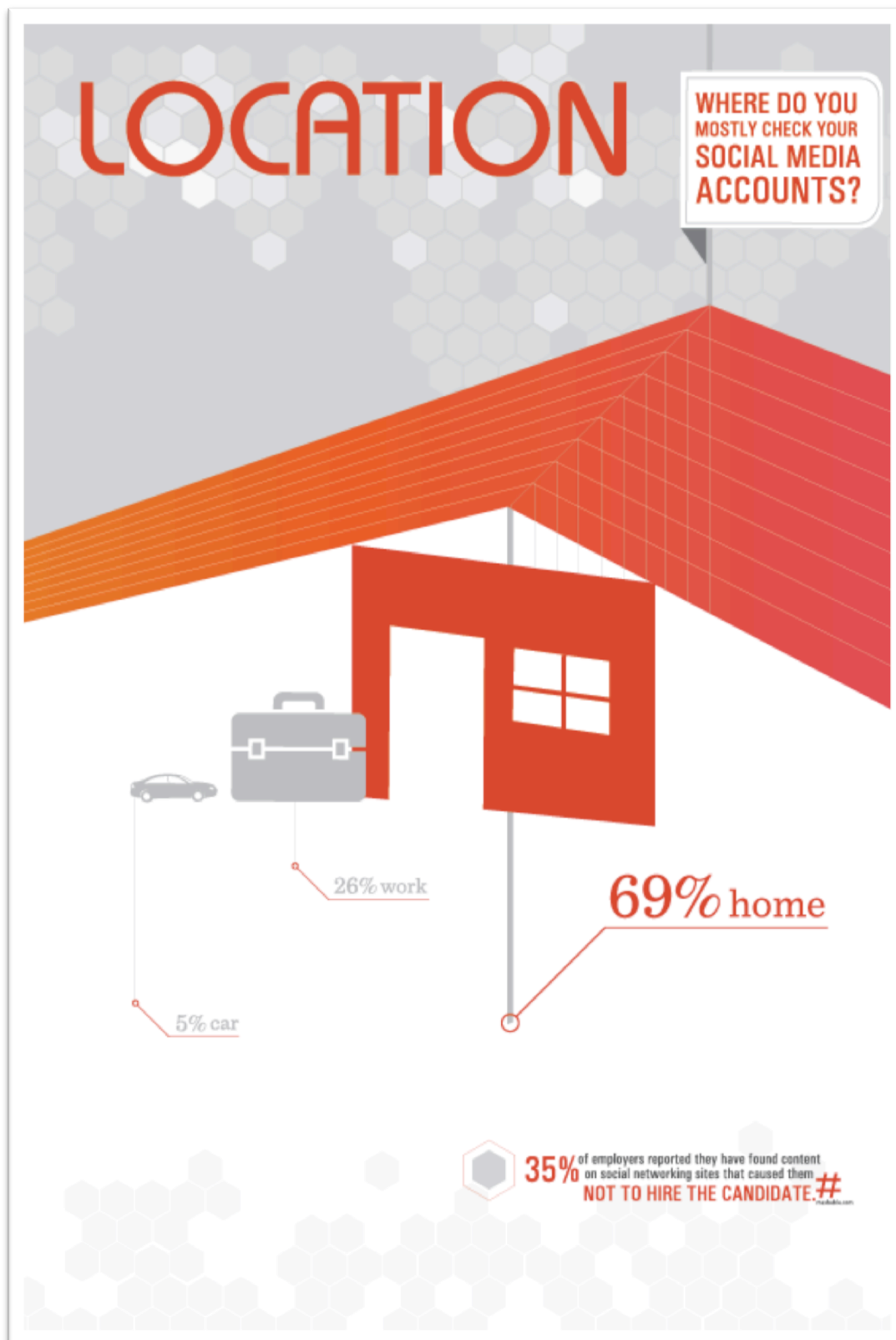


Fig. 21 – Final piece “Location”

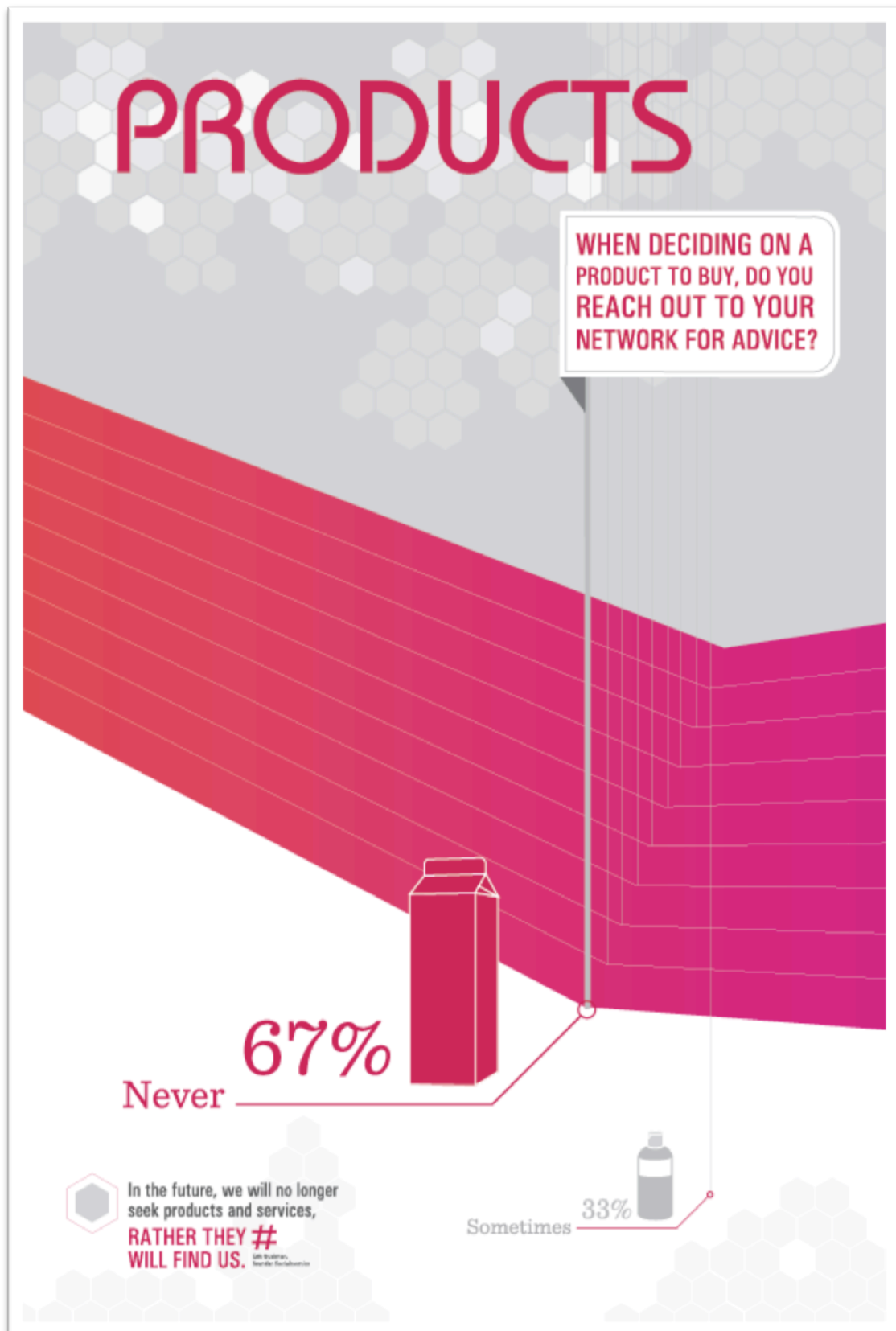


Fig. 22 – Final piece “Products”

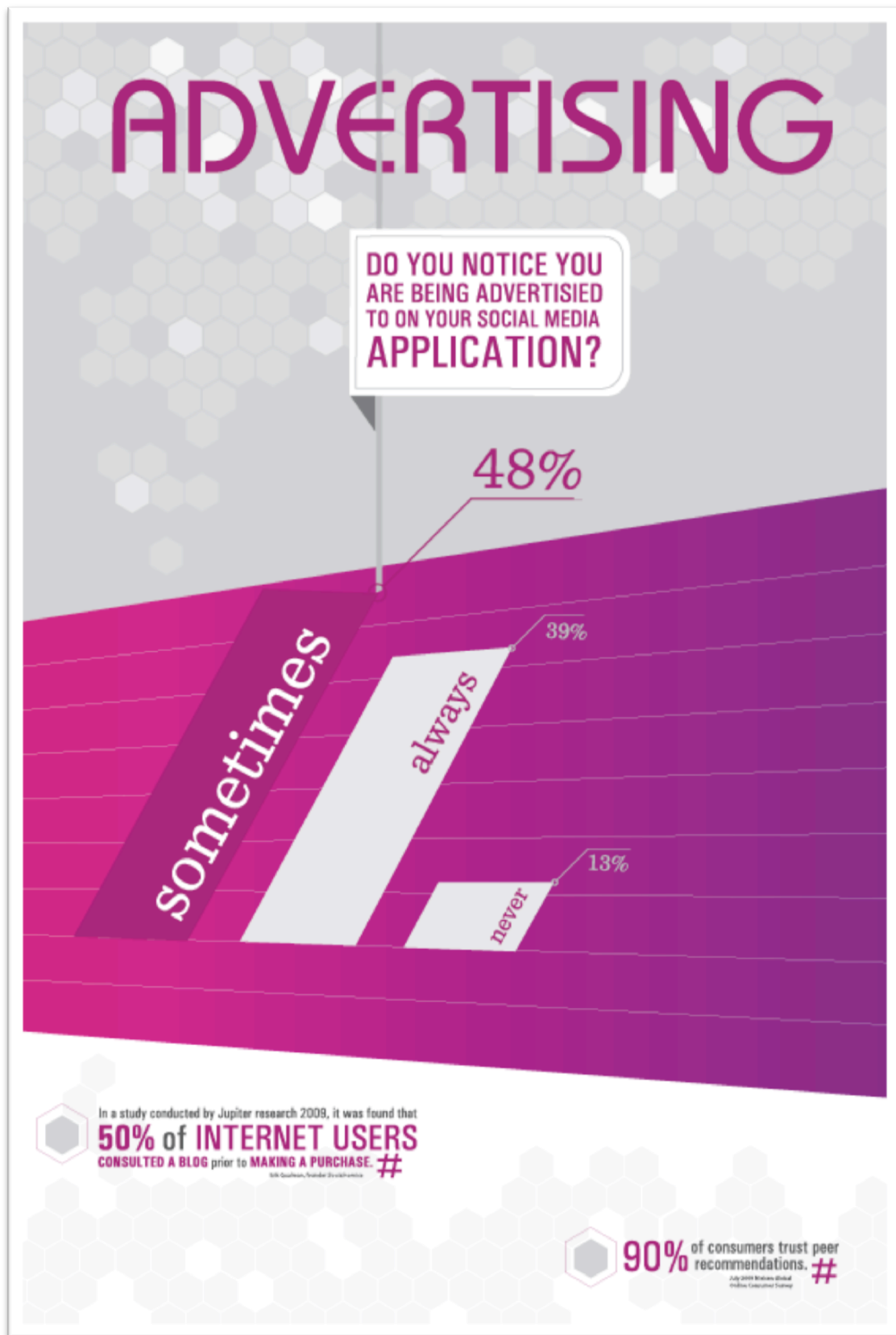


Fig. 23 – Final piece “Advertising”



Fig. 24 – Final piece “Favorite”



**Fig. 25 – Photograph, final installation**

## CONCLUSION

The importance of social media as a medium for communicating becomes obvious in the results of the survey and information graphic component. Facebook is proven to be the most commonly used and favored application. Knowing this, graphic designers will design compelling ads that speak specifically to the Facebook community.

There are big differences between images for Facebook ads and those for print and web ads. Professional-looking ads aren't best on the social network.<sup>10</sup>

The analysis also shows that Facebook users like to check their account in the evening, and at home. With this information, I now know to post my advertising or anything I want to be widely seen in the evening.

Small business owner E.Lee Jahncke, of E.Lee Jahncke Fine Finishes, recently shared with me her recent experience with Facebook. "I have 0 dollars for advertising, but I needed to advertise to get more business." E.Lee started using Facebook and noticed her fan page growing daily. She posted pictures of her recent projects and found people she didn't formerly know commenting on them. I asked her if she thought her business had grown because of it, "yes, I think so, about 30%. Social Media has really helped me meet others in my industry and position myself as an expert in my field." E.Lee was able to increase her business, and create name recognition for herself and she didn't have to spend any money doing it. E.Lee is a decorative painter, but social media can be used for

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10. Dan Zarrella, *The Facebook Marketing Book*. (Sebastopol, California: O'Reilly Media, 2011), 227.

any industry. It is a perfect tool for anyone looking to increase awareness of a product, a cause, or even an event.

I was surprised by the results in the product category. The data collected revealed that 67% of people never reach out to their social media for advice when buying a product, 33% sometimes reach out, and nobody always looks for advice. All of the pre-existing research I have found contradicts this result. Companies are aware that their buyers do consult with friends for product advice. One company's solution was to look to their consumers for branding advice.

One Australian company, Companion Credit Union actually turned over the decision on its brand logo to the social community. "The credit union is really owned by the members, and therefore, we decided we should invite them to actively participate in helping us decide,"<sup>11</sup> said Ray O'Brien, CEO/Companion. Of the 12,000 members, 1,000 of them voted in an online forum.<sup>12</sup>

While this research is just a glimpse at social media habits, the survey used in collecting this data is a method that can be used in future research to find even more specific trends in the social media world

The exploration in this thesis is meant to educate graphic designers on the importance of social media and the power it can have in delivering a message to a large audience. Additionally it is aimed to inform the public that is not using social media of its magnitude and influence on society.

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11. Credit Union Members Vote on Logo Makeover last modified on November 21, 2008, <http://thefinancialbrand.com/3400/companion-logo-contest/>.

12. Qualman, *Socialnomics*, 112.



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[http://www.webopedia.com/TERM/F/Facebook\\_wall.html](http://www.webopedia.com/TERM/F/Facebook_wall.html).

## **VITA**

Carter Jahncke Perrilliat was born in 1980, in New Orleans, Louisiana. She received a Bachelor of Fine Arts, with a concentration in graphic design, from Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in 2002. Carter currently operates a freelance company, MOCA Graphics. She resides in New Orleans with her husband. She completed her Master of Fine Arts from the Louisiana State University in May 2011.